

# Department of Human Services

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## Articles in Today's Clips Friday, September 29, 2006

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Published September 29, 2006

## Hairdresser says she found Lisa's comments 'odd'

In early days of search, mom visited a salon

By Kevin Grasha  
Lansing State Journal

As hundreds of people searched for her 7-year-old adopted son, Lisa Holland told her hairdresser she "just needed to go on with her life," the stylist said in court Thursday.

Felicity Rall testified about the day in early July 2005 when Holland showed up at a Williamston beauty salon to have her eyebrows waxed. Ricky had been missing for about three days.

"I just found it odd," Rall said about Holland's comment.

But Rall also agreed with Holland's co-counsel Mike Nichols that people react to tragedies in different ways.

Lisa Holland is charged with murder and child abuse in Ricky's death. Her husband, Tim Holland, has pleaded guilty to second-degree murder and is expected to testify against her. The trial is in its second week.

Rall also testified that in late July, Lisa Holland gave her a card — which she still keeps in her purse — that reads: "Jesus gives me life. In the memory of Ricky."

Later, sometime before Christmas, Rall said Lisa told her she bought gifts for Ricky, "for when he came home."

Tim Holland led authorities to Ricky's remains on Jan. 27.

### Trial recap

Week 1, Sept. 18-22:

In opening arguments, prosecutors say the case against Lisa Holland is about manipulation, deception and concealment. Defense attorneys counter that the prosecution's key witness, Tim Holland, is not credible and his guilty plea was intended solely to protect himself.

A Jackson County social worker testifies that in February 2001, Ricky said Lisa Holland tied him up at night. The social worker filed a report with Child Protective Services, but the report was not substantiated.

Jackson school officials testify the Ricky they knew was not the same boy described and often disparaged by Lisa Holland.

Testimony also reveals Ricky was removed from elementary school after it was determined he did not qualify for the special education services Lisa wanted.

This week:

Day 6, Monday: Investigators found tiny blood stains in several rooms of Tim and Lisa Holland's Williamston home, a state police forensic scientist testifies. The forensic scientist says the blood is evidence of injury. "It's not typical to find blood stains all over the place like that," he says.

Day 7, Tuesday: No testimony

Day 8, Wednesday: A new portrait of Lisa Holland emerges in court: A loving mother who frequently called her family physician with child-rearing questions. But testimony also revealed that the doctor last saw Ricky on Sept. 20, 2002 — although he treated other family members until 2005 — and that no records show Ricky ever went to another physician.

What's next

Lisa Holland's trial continues today before Ingham County Circuit Judge Paula Manderfield. Scheduled to testify are the principal of a Jackson school Ricky attended, two Ingham County sheriff's detectives, an Ingham County jail inmate and a Williamston neighbor of the Hollands'.

Rall, who said she did Lisa Holland's hair about once a month, testified that four of Holland's five children were listed as customers in the salon's computer. Ricky was not.

Also Thursday, a Jackson child psychiatrist who saw Ricky about 30 times between September 2001 and July 2004 testified he never suspected abuse.

Dr. Aurif Abedi diagnosed Ricky with attention-deficit (hyperactivity) disorder, bipolar disorder and oppositional defiance disorder. He prescribed several medications.

Abedi, who saw Ricky every three to four weeks, said he relied mostly on information Lisa Holland provided — including school records and letters from teachers — to make the diagnoses.

"I had no reason to (believe) she was not telling the truth," he said.

Abedi recalled Ricky hitting himself during one session in his office. He said Tim Holland comforted Ricky by holding him.

The final time Abedi saw Ricky was July 9, 2004, which also was the last time he was seen by any medical professional, according to testimony about insurance records.

Abedi said he would be concerned about someone with Ricky's problems not being treated.

"His conditions were chronic, and he needed to have ongoing care," Abedi said.

Contact Kevin Grasha at 267-1347 or [kgrasha@lsj.com](mailto:kgrasha@lsj.com).

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## 911 tape reveals sobbing mother

Friday, September 29, 2006

By John Agar

**The Grand Rapids Press**

HASTINGS -- Sobbing and frantic, Jennifer Clement pleaded for help after her baby daughter ingested bleach-laced formula.

"My son, he's 3, I don't know how he got ahold of it, but he put bleach in my ... daughter's bottle. ... It's stinky, and she smells like it really bad," the 23-year-old Hastings woman told rescuers, according to a recording of her 911 call.

Police say it was all an act.

Clement was arraigned Thursday in Barry County District Court on a charge of first-degree child abuse, a 15-year felony.

Police allege she poisoned her 8-month-old daughter, Belle Clement, and delayed seeking help for an hour.

The baby was taken by ambulance Sept. 8 for treatment at Pennock Hospital. She and her brother, Christopher Anderson, are in foster care.

Police said the children were living in filthy conditions when they responded to the mother's 911 call to her home.

Clement said her daughter drank the bleach an hour earlier, but had just started vomiting.

The mother was so upset the dispatcher said he sent an ambulance as much to relieve her panic as to help the child. The call also was connected to a poison control operator, who tried to calm Clement, asking her to take a couple of deep breaths.

Police say they found a strong odor of bleach in the home, as well as on the baby's mouth and clothes.

Court records allege Clement had become frustrated with her children, and allegedly told others her son "is evil, and probably poisoned his sister," according to protective-services records filed in Barry County Family Court.

She told investigators her son unlocked a child-proof cap on the bleach bottle and poured bleach into the baby bottle. She also suggested an 18-year-old woman at her house when the child was poisoned "had something to do with the bleach," according to court documents.

Authorities said her explanations didn't fit the circumstances and evidence of the poisoning.

Bond was set at \$5,000. Clement has a hearing next week in District Court.

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## Bad Axe couple face child abuse charges

STACY LANGLEY, The Huron Daily Tribune  
09/28/2006

**BAD AXE** — On

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Wednesday, six witnesses were called to testify in Huron County District Court during the preliminary examination for a Bad Axe couple accused of abusing their 1-month-old baby boy in early February. The couple allegedly threw, squeezed and dropped the baby, causing life-threatening injuries to the child.

The husband, Ryan Welshans, 24, represented by attorney David B. Herrington, and wife, Stardust Welshans, also 24, represented by attorney James Woodworth, sat at the back of the courtroom while Huron County Assistant Prosecuting Attorney Elizabeth V. Weisenbach and Prosecutor Mark J. Gaertner presented their case against the couple.

Both Ryan and Stardust Welshans each face a felony charge of child abuse. The couple appeared unemotional as witnesses took the stand telling the court about the child's condition and what the parents told each of them about how they injured the child.

Dr. Brian Nolan, chief of staff/director of critical care and physician specializing in pediatrics at Hurley Hospital in Flint, treated the Welshans' baby on Feb. 6, just two days after the child was first rushed to Huron Medical Center in Bad Axe.

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Ryan Welshans called 9-1-1 on Feb. 4 because the baby was reportedly having difficulty breathing.

Nolan testified over the telephone he examined the child, who was comatose and on a ventilator in the Pediatric ICU at Hurley. The doctor, reviewing the child's medical charts, began to list the injuries the child sustained: a fractured right collarbone, two skull fractures, an abrasion to the eyelid on the left side, bruising in the groin area, retinal hemorrhage to the right side and bleeding inside the eyeball, and bleeding on the brain in three areas — which he noted were from injuries sustained on different days.

"The one (the brain bleed) on the left side was several days old, the one (brain bleed) on the back side and between the two hemispheres of the brain was more recent," said Nolan, who described the coloring of the bleed shown in a CAT scan indicated the approximate age of the bleeds. "The recent bleed is white and as it ages it gets darker."

The doctor told the court in his opinion the child endured at least two episodes of trauma (to his head), and one impact blow to the brain. He considered the child's injuries to be "non-accidental trauma or child abuse" (since there was no explanation given to him about how the child was injured).

Also testifying on Wednesday were Det./Sgt. Ron Roberts and Det. Richard Koehler of the Huron County Sheriff's Office. The detectives told the court that both Ryan and Stardust admitted to incidents in which they injured the child.

Roberts said that during a series of interviews with Ryan Welshans he told several different versions of how he injured the child, one of which was that he became "so enraged" with the child for crying he took the child with both hands and threw the baby onto the bed. Roberts said Ryan Welshans then described, and even showed him, how the child hit the bed, then the wall with his head, then the floor some time during the late night or early morning hours of Feb. 3 or Feb.

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When Koehler took the stand he told the court Ryan Welshans admitted to him during an interview that he caused the bruises to the child's groin area on Feb. 3. Koehler said Welshans told him the incident occurred when he was on the telephone with Stardust and he became angry with the baby.

There were several interviews with Ryan Welshans before detectives received a call from Stardust Welshans requesting to speak to them about the injured baby. Roberts and Koehler said Wednesday that she told them she injured the baby when she got up in the middle of the night on Feb. 4 with a headache. She reached into her purse and took two Vicodin by mistake. When she got up to care for the baby around 1 a.m. — when she said she felt like she was going to blackout — she squeezed the baby tight causing what she believed to be a fracture to the baby's ribs.

She said on another occasion she became dizzy again while carrying the baby to the kitchen for a bottle and her arms went limp and she dropped the baby to the floor. She said she believed the baby sustained serious head injuries, Koehler told the court.

Under a court order from Huron County Probate Court at the time the child was injured in February, Ryan and Stardust Welshans were living separately. Ryan was the baby's caregiver and Stardust was only allowed supervised visitation with the baby and the couple's older son (who was already in foster care). The detectives told the court Wednesday Ryan Welshans told them he allowed Stardust to visit his home with the baby the weekend the baby was injured.

Woodworth expressed his concern with the detectives' questioning of Stardust Welshans at all after her former attorney, Dawn Schumacher, told detectives not to talk to Stardust. But the detectives sought legal advice from the prosecutor's office and interviewed her anyway.

Kraus said on Wednesday Stardust sought out the detectives to speak to them about the case and she told them she fired her attorney.

The last three people to take the stand to testify were three inmates, Tamera Froh and Heather Harder, both called by the prosecution, and Laura Mozek, called by Woodworth.

Froh, Harder and Mozek told the court they were lodged with Stardust at the Huron County Jail when Stardust told them how she "wanted to see if the baby could fly" when she threw the child on to the bed. The baby hit the bed, the wall, then the floor.

"She said she was in jail for beating (her baby)," said Froh.

Froh also told the court that Stardust told each of them she wasn't getting her baby back and that she was happy about it.

"She said she didn't want boys, she and her husband only wanted girls. And they were going to have more when she got out," said Froh.

"I don't want to see her go out and do it to another child."

Each of the women admitted to the court they were upset because they are mothers and felt something needed to be done.

Both Harder and Mozek told the court they wrote a note to jail officials asking to speak to someone about the statements Stardust made to them.

Woodworth, calling each of the women a snitch, pointed out to the court they were upset with his client for getting them in trouble while in jail and that's why they were coming forward.

After Mozek stepped down, Gaertner asked Kraus to bind the matter over to circuit court where the couple would face charges.



Herrington told the court he didn't feel the prosecutor's office met their burden of proof, due in part to the fact there were a number of inconsistent statements about how the child was injured.

But Kraus said he found sufficient evidence that there was probable cause that the child was injured, and that both Ryan and Stardust Welshans injured the child, binding the matter over to circuit court.

The couple will be arraigned at 1:30 p.m. on Oct. 10 in circuit court.


During a hearing in Huron County Probate Court, both Ryan and Stardust Welshans agreed to the termination their parental rights of both their sons — the baby boy who is now 9-months-old and an older son who was in foster care when the baby was injured.

Ryan Welshans remains lodged in the Huron County Jail while Stardust Welshans is being lodged in the Tuscola County Jail.

The couple face up to 15-years in prison if they're convicted of the first-degree child abuse charge.

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#### Reader Comments

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Added: Thursday September 28, 2006 at 07:52 PM EST

#### **Baby Abuser's Need Life In Prison**

What I don't understand is. Where was FIA at? And Why was the other son in foster Care? For the same reason as to the child abuse as the 1 month old? Where is the system at when there are calls made to them? The only time anything is done on child abuse cases is when a child is either hurt real bad or they are dead. Thats when the sytem will step in and do anything. I think FIA and the Prosecuter need to open there eyes and look into child abuse a little differently and do something with these children before they are hurt really bad or dead. I think they need to be put in prison and have someone torcher them like they did to their kids. One thing the sytem needs to wake up!!!!

, Huron County

Added: Thursday September 28, 2006 at 03:46 PM EST

**outrageous**

This is the type of crime against children where I wish we had mandatory sterilizations. These young adults do not need to have any more babies! Ever!

Laurie, Caro, MI

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## Mom charged in baby bleach bottle incident

Updated: Sep 29, 2006 12:04 AM EDT



Jennifer Clement

**HASTINGS** - The mother of a baby whose bottle contained bleach was arraigned Thursday morning on child abuse charges.

Jennifer Clement faces two felony counts of first- and second-degree child abuse related to an incident at her home Sept. 8.

The 8-month-old girl, Belle, had several ounces of bleach in her bottle. She was taken to Pennock Hospital for treatment after Clement called 9-1-1. Belle and an older child are now in foster care.

Bond for Clement was set at \$5,000. If convicted, she faces up to 15 years in prison.

24 Hour News 8 will have more details as they develop.

*Previous story from 24 Hour News 8:*

**[Baby poisoned after drinking formula mixed with bleach](#)**



Belle and Christopher Clement



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## Police: No trauma in death of Detroit baby

**By Cecil Angel**

Free Press Staff Writer

*September 28, 2006*

A preliminary examination by police investigators concluded there was no evidence of trauma or abuse in the death of a 3-month old, Detroit police said Thursday.

Now, police are waiting for the report from the medical examiner's office, Detroit Police Sgt. Omar Feliciano said.

On Wednesday, police were called at 12:30 p.m. to a home in the 4400 block of 35th Street in southwest Detroit about a deceased child.

A man told police that the child was asleep on a bed and when he went to check on him, he found he had rolled off the bed. The child landed in a bin filled with stuff animals and apparently had suffocated, he told police.

Feliciano said the death was being treated as accidental.

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## MACOMB COUNTY

DETROIT FREE PRESS NEWS IN A MINUTE: Macomb County

*September 29, 2006*

# **MT. CLEMENS: Smoker convicted of manslaughter in baby's death**

A Macomb County jury deliberated just over two hours Thursday before finding a Clinton Township man guilty of involuntary manslaughter for starting a fire that killed a 7-month-old girl.

Paul Renwick, 57, also faced arson and second-degree murder charges, but the jury cleared him on those. The fire happened the day after Thanksgiving last year at an apartment complex near 16 Mile and Harper.

Authorities say Renwick, who had been drinking, started the blaze by falling asleep with a lit cigarette while hooked up to his oxygen tank. At least one of the oxygen tanks stored in Renwick's apartment blew up.

Marquita Minor was trying to escape the burning building with her 7-month-old daughter, Kimora, when one of her neighbors jostled her, and she and Kimora tumbled down the stairs.

Sentencing guidelines call for a minimum of between three and four years and a maximum of 15. Judge Donald Miller is to sentence Renwick on Nov. 1.



## Couple face trial in abuse case

Friday, September 29, 2006

### THE SAGINAW NEWS

**BAD AXE --** A Bad Axe couple is headed to court on charges they abused their infant son in February.

Huron County District Court Judge Karl E. Kraus concluded a Wednesday preliminary hearing by ruling sufficient evidence exists for Ryan S. and Stardust L. Welshans, both 24, to stand trial in Circuit Court on first-degree felony child abuse charges, the Huron Daily Tribune reported.

The couple must appear for Circuit Court arraignment Tuesday, Oct. 10. They could spend 15 years in prison.

Authorities have accused the couple of throwing, squeezing and dropping their 1-month-old son who suffered life-threatening injuries, Saginaw News records show.

Both parents have surrendered their parental rights to the baby, now 9 months old, and an older son. v

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## THE ANN ARBOR NEWS

### Teacher pleads guilty to having sex with student

Conviction means he won't teach again in Michigan schools

Friday, September 29, 2006

**BY SUSAN L. OPPAT**

**News Staff Reporter**

A South Lyon High School teacher, whose 15-year-old student insisted they were in love, pleaded guilty to six felonies this week, in exchange for a judge's promise to sentence him to just three years in prison.

Edward F. Baldwin, 53, of Highland, pleaded guilty Monday, the day his Oakland County trial was to begin, to three counts each of second- and third-degree criminal sexual conduct. Each charge carries a maximum 15-year prison sentence.

He remains free on bond pending sentencing Oct. 30, but the conviction ensures he will never legally teach again in any Michigan school.

Baldwin was suspended as a teacher on the same day a South Lyon woman took her 15-year-old daughter to police, after a family member found a nude photo of Baldwin in the girl's room.

The girl told police the pair were in love, and that she had asked for the photo. Baldwin eventually admitted to a sexual relationship with the girl, according to South Lyon Police Lt. Steve Sharpe.

School officials said it was the first complaint of this type against Baldwin in 21 years with the district. He taught English and was an assistant varsity football coach at the high school.

Baldwin's employment was terminated May 23. His conviction forced a suspension of his teaching certificate, and will result in permanent revocation under the state school code.

"That ensures that he will not be teaching anywhere," said Melissa Meister, South Lyon Community Schools assistant superintendent.

Rob Giles, leader of the Oakland County Prosecutor's child sexual assault unit, said Thursday the sentencing agreement "reflects the serious nature of the crime. He's going to be spending three years in the Michigan prison system, which, by its nature, is not a very pleasant place. And he will be considered one of lowest of the low, someone who sexually assaults children," Giles said.

While the relationship was not forced on the girl, Giles said, "schools are supposed to be a place where students go to learn, not to be picked up by their teachers."

Susan Oppat can be reached at [soppat@annarbornews.com](mailto:soppat@annarbornews.com) or at 734-482-1166.

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Michigan Report

September 28, 2006

## **STATE SUED OVER COST OF SCHOOL BACKGROUND CHECKS**

A coalition of school districts has sued the state over what it calls a violation of the Headlee Amendment, by requiring schools to conduct background checks and fingerprinting of employees without providing extra funding.

The group, made up of approximately 463 school districts, says that at a cost of at least \$65 per employee, the state is forcing cash-strapped districts to use more resources outside the classroom. For the school district in Saginaw, the total cost of complying with the Student Safety Act that passed last year was more than \$136,000 over two years. The district over the summer had faced a \$7 million budget deficit, according to a release from [Keep the Promise to Michigan's Children](#).

Greg Bird, spokesperson for the Department of Management and Budget, said the state has received the lawsuit but because it is under review, he could not comment further.

Dennis Pollard, lead counsel for the coalition and an attorney at Thrun Law Firm, said the lawsuit was filed Wednesday.

“Legislation that looks to protect our children, teachers and staff is something we can all agree is needed. But each new mandate handed down to school districts without the necessary funding costs our schools, and eventually will cost our students,” he said.

Section 29, Article IX of the Headlee Amendment to the Constitution states, “A new activity or service or an increase in the level of any activity or service beyond that required by existing law shall not be required by the legislature or any state agency of units of Local Government, unless a state appropriation is made and disbursed to pay the unit of Local Government for any necessary increased costs. The provision of this section shall not apply to costs incurred pursuant to Article VI, Section 18.”



## Agencies expand AIDS testing, education efforts

By **PATRICIA ANSTETT**

FREE PRESS MEDICAL WRITER

*September 28, 2006*

Two Detroit health and social services agencies will expand HIV testing and educational efforts among young black males with \$1.9 million in new federal funds over the next five years.

AIDS Partnership Michigan and the Ruth Ellis Center, a social service agency that provides Michigan's only street outreach and transitional living program for homeless and runaway gay, lesbian, transgender and bisexual youth, will collaborate on the programs.

They hope to use street outreach programs to offer HIV testing and health referral services to African American males ages 13 to 24. The money will help pay for faster tests that give results in 20 minutes, said Barbara Murray, executive director of AIDS Partnership. "These kids are very mobile and move around a lot. When you've got them, you got to get to them."

The projects will be housed at the Ruth Ellis Center in Detroit's Cass Corridor, with management, testing and referral services managed by AIDS Partnership Michigan, the biggest provider of HIV and AIDS support services in metro Detroit.

Two-thirds of the 16,200 people in Michigan estimated to have HIV or AIDS live in metro Detroit. The majority of the state's HIV/AIDS cases - 51% - are men who have sex with other men.

For details, call 313-446-9800, or go to [www.aidspartnership.org](http://www.aidspartnership.org).

Contact PATRICIA ANSTETT at 313-222-5021 or [panstett@freepress.com](mailto:panstett@freepress.com).

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## Silent witnesses cry for justice

Of The Oakland Press

The numbers are shocking: 55 people were killed in Michigan last year by domestic violence, one of whom was from Oakland County.

And in just this past year, the county has recorded seven murders linked to domestic violence, said Lisa Gorcyca, chief of domestic violence in the county's prosecuting attorney division and the main speaker at Beaumont Hospital's Silent Witness Commemoration Service on Thursday in Royal Oak.

"It needs to stop," she told the audience of mostly health-care professionals. Kim Goode, a clinical nurse specialist at Beaumont and the event organizer, has studied the death tolls in Michigan.

In 2004, 43 people were killed. Last year, 55 died. She predicts this year's totals will climb. "I believe the increase this year has a lot to do with our (poor) economy," Goode said.

The ceremony - which began in Minnesota in 1990 and now takes place in all 50 states - featured a dramatic moment when volunteers carried in large, red, wooden figures that symbolized the people killed as the result of domestic violence during the prior year. A short statement describing how the victims died was attached to the life-size silhouettes - considered "silent witnesses."

Throughout October, which is Domestic Violence Awareness Month, the Beaumont staff at Royal Oak and Troy will be collecting food and personal items to donate to local shelters. During the ceremony, Gorcyca urged attendees to ask if patients were being hurt at home. . The Rev. Bonnie Krauskoff read the 55 victims' names aloud during the ceremony, and a bell was rung for each.

One victim, Leila Armin, had ties to the hospital.

Her parents, Dr. Ali-Reza Armin, a pathologist at Beaumont, and Nahid Armin, were in attendance.

After the ceremony, Nahid Armin pulled a framed photograph of her daughter from a bag at her feet.

"I thought they might need this," she said quietly, holding out a portrait of a smiling dark-haired woman.

Leila Armin of Troy was killed June 16, 2005, by her boyfriend Amir Aziz Shahideh, who beat the 20-year-old woman with a baseball bat and stabbed her to death.

The Armin family knew the murderer for years, "since he was a kid," Ali-Reza Armin said. As for there being more public awareness of domestic violence, Ali-Reza Armin said emphatically, "I am all for it."

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Michigan Report

September 28, 2006

## **MEDICAL SOCIETY BACKS GRANHOLM HEALTH CARE PLAN**

The Michigan State Medical Society, the organization of MDs in the state, has endorsed the Michigan First Health Care plan proposed by Governor Jennifer Granholm as a way of reducing the number of uninsured people in the state.

An administration official called the announcement “very good news.” The state is still in negotiations with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services on the details of the proposal that Ms. Granholm first announced during her State of the State address.

The administration’s proposal matches up with a main plank in the MSMS’ own initiative on improving health care in Michigan: ensuring that all state residents have health care coverage.

In a press release, MSMS President Paul Farr said it “makes sense morally and financially that everyone has access to health care. When people don’t have coverage, they tend to put off seeing a doctor and the illness gets worse, or they go to an emergency room, the most expensive form of treatment.”

And in an interview, Mr. Farr said it made business sense to encourage universal coverage, since the cost to care for a person without coverage is borne through others by increased health insurance premiums.

An estimated 1.1 million people in Michigan do not have any form of health care coverage, and the plan is aiming at providing coverage of 550,000 of those.

Earlier this year, Ms. Granholm said she wanted the proposal eventually expanded to cover all people without health insurance.

Community Health spokesperson T.J. Bucholz said the state is still negotiating with the federal department over details in the proposal and hoped to file for a waiver soon. He said he hoped the proposal would be in place by next April.

Mr. Farr said the organization’s support is not intended as a political statement, as the organization will not endorse between either Ms. Granholm or Republican Dick DeVos.

And if Mr. DeVos should win, Mr. Farr said the organization would encourage him to look at continuing either with Ms. Granholm’s proposal or the plan in Massachusetts to provide full medical care coverage. As a business executive, Mr. Farr said Mr. DeVos should see its value.

## **MSMS Endorses Granholm's Health Care Plan**

MIRS, Thursday, September 28, 2006

The Michigan State Medical Society (MSMS) today announced its endorsement of the concept of Gov. Jennifer [GRANHOLM](#)'s Michigan First Health Care Plan to help provide health care for the growing number of uninsured in Michigan, which is now at 1.1 million people.

"A long-term goal of the Michigan State Medical Society is universal health care coverage - in one form or another - for all Michigan residents," said MSMS President Paul **FARR**. "This program would be a move in the right direction toward ensuring access to care for everyone."

The MSMS stressed that its Board of Directors only endorsed the Michigan First Health Care Plan in concept because the state was "still in the process of obtaining a waiver from the federal government" that would allow more federal tax dollars to come back to Michigan to help pay for the program.

However, as of Aug. 29, the Granholm administration had yet to officially file for the waiver (See "[DCH Not Filed Health Waiver. Yet](#)" 8/29/06).

"What health care plan?" quipped John [TRUSCOTT](#), spokesman for Republican gubernatorial nominee Dick **DeVOS**. "A press release does not make a plan. She said we were going to have this by [next] April, but the last we knew she hadn't even filed for the federal waiver."

The Michigan First Health Care Plan was first announced by Granholm in this year's State of the State Address, and according to its billing would eventually cover between 550,000 and 1 million people who currently have no health insurance.

"Our understanding is that the Michigan First Health Care Plan would cover those who earn too much money to be eligible for Medicaid, yet are in jobs that either don't provide insurance or don't pay enough for the employees to buy insurance themselves," Farr said. "A cornerstone of an MSMS initiative announced earlier this year, 'The Future of Medicine, Leading the Way to a Better Health Care System,' calls for making sure all Michigan residents have health care coverage."

DETROIT FREE PRESS NEWS IN A MINUTE: Wayne County

*September 29, 2006*

## **COUNTY-WIDE: \$500 million goes for mental health without board OK**

The Wayne County Commission on Thursday unanimously approved more than \$500 million in contract extensions for providers of mental health services.

The moves came three days before the start of the 2006-07 fiscal year.

The vote by the commission helped County Executive Robert Ficano bypass the Detroit-Wayne County Community Mental Health Agency's board, which had held off on approving the contracts in an effort by some of its members to push the county into turning over control of the agency to an independent authority.

The 12-member board, which has six members each appointed by Ficano and Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick, has been deadlocked on the independent authority issue. On Wednesday, city board members proposed a 60-day extension, but the full board divided on a 6-6 vote.



## Greenville planners OK homeless shelter

Friday, September 29, 2006

By Susie Fair

**The Grand Rapids Press**

GREENVILLE -- Hope Ministries got the go-ahead Thursday night to renovate the former Faith Baptist Church into a rescue mission, putting an end to a controversy stewing for nearly a year.

By a 4-3 vote, Greenville Planning Commission approved a special-use permit for the religious organization, which first brought its plans for the homeless shelter to the city in November 2005.

The shelter, in the former Faith Baptist Church at 1015 E. Washington St., would house eight to 10 men, each for up to 30 days.

The approval brought an onslaught of criticism from residents who have alleged having a homeless shelter in their East Washington Street neighborhood will bring their property values down.

"We could find no data to substantiate that claim, nor that it would cause an increase in crime," Planning Commission Chairman David Ralph said.

Currently, there are limited resources for the homeless in Montcalm County, and most homeless individuals are sent to Guiding Light Mission or Mel Trotter Ministries in Grand Rapids.

Those too proud to seek help have been spotted sleeping in cars in parks and cemeteries. Others find refuge in makeshift tents set up along the Flat River Trail and in farmers' fields, Hope Ministries Executive Director Barbara Vickery said.

"Even though we've had many heartbreaking ups and downs, we never lost faith that the city would realize there's an urgent need for a facility like this," she said.

"These are not the criminals they're made out to be. Most of them have fallen on hard times and just need a little help getting back on their feet."

With the weather getting colder, the timing of getting a permit was crucial for Hope Ministries.

As the shelter's operations manager, Jim Vickery has sat with his wife through months of public hearings where harsh words were spoken by shelter opponents.

"We went into this thinking people would be more compassionate toward the homeless, never expecting to face so much adversity," he said. "This victory was bittersweet for us because a lot of neighbors are still upset."

The Vickerys expect the shelter will be up running in two to three months.

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## Missions struggle to meet rising demand

Friday, September 29, 2006

By Shandra Martinez

The Grand Rapids Press

HOLLAND -- Tom remembers visiting the sturdy brick building in downtown Holland when he was a boy.

Back then, it was a Sears Roebuck & Co. department store.

"My family always went shopping here," said the 46-year-old, with a smile.

Four decades later, the building is the closest thing he has to a home.

Over the past 15 years, he has been in and out of the Holland Rescue Mission while struggling to maintain steady employment.

A \$1.8 million renovation of the facility has created more beds including a section for men who can't live on their own but don't qualify to live in a group home.

"He's part of the family," says Darryl Bartlett, executive director of the Holland Rescue Mission for the past 14 years.

Under his leadership, the organization has grown to include two shelters, three thrift stores, a recycling center and a used-car program.

The expansion of the men's facility is the second phase of Project Rescue, which began with construction of the \$4.5 million Family Hope Ministry Center on Fairbanks Avenue, across from Smullenberg Park in 2000.

In Grand Rapids, Mel Trotter Ministries and Guiding Light Mission also are finding it hard to keep up with demand, especially for long-term programs

There is a waiting list of 17 for long-term programs, said Tom Meyers, president and CEO of Mel Trotter Ministries, the largest rescue mission in West Michigan.

"This is going through summer. I don't know what it will be in the winter," he said.

Guiding Light Mission program has nearly exceeded last year's numbers, Executive Director Chico Daniels said.

Members of the Association of Gospel Rescue Missions, three of the organizations offer both emergency shelter as well as skill-building programs intended to help people transition off the streets.

"We are attracting people who want change," Bartlett said.

Crews are putting final touches of the Holland Rescue renovation, which has improved the building's efficiency and capacity.

There is a larger dormitory section, expanded storage and more office space to provide counseling and health services to mission residents.



The former two-story store has been upgraded with industrial grade materials. The goal is to create a facility that won't need any significant improvements for 15 to 20 years, Bartlett said.

The first phase of the renovation of the men's shelter began three years ago when the second floor was converted into semi-private transitional housing.

To qualify, residents must graduate from the mission's four-month life skills and six-month life application pro-

grams.

About a sixth of the 600 who come for emergency shelter continue through vocational training.

The focus of the life skills program is on a long-term career path. Training is offered in culinary arts, auto mechanics and commercial custodial floor care.

The new dining area is bigger and resembles the restaurant feel of Family Hope Ministry Center. A newly created exercise room is outfitted with used fitness equipment donated by Family Fitness Center of Holland.

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## Young author's mission is to help the homeless

Friday, September 29, 2006

By Shandra Martinez

**The Grand Rapids Press**

HOLLAND -- What caused an upper-middle class college student to trade campus life for life on the streets?

It wasn't a drug problem, but a desire to walk in someone else's shoes for Michael Yankoski.

While attending church one Sunday, the then-21-year-old felt the call to build his faith. He took off six months between his junior and senior years at Westmont College in Santa Barbara, Calif., to be homeless.

Traveling with a friend, Sam Purvis, the two lived on the streets in six major cities, including Denver; Washington D.C., Portland, Ore.; San Francisco; Phoenix; and San Diego.

They panhandled, ate out of Dumpsters and slept under bridges. They spent time getting to know those who are often ignored and rejected.

The experience shattered his stereotypes of homelessness. In Portland, he discovered most homeless in the Oregon city are between the ages of 13 and 22.

His experience is chronicled in the 224-page book "Under the Overpass" published by Multnomah Publishers.

"I tried to be a voice for people who don't have a voice," said Yankoski, whose book has sold 40,000 copies since it was published two years ago. "I'm blown away by that number. People are reading it and passing it along."

The book has drawn positive reviews on Amazon.com, and readers discuss the book at [undertheoverpass.com](http://undertheoverpass.com).

Since graduating with a bachelor's degree in computer science and theology, Yankoski has been crisscrossing the country, speaking at colleges and rescue missions to raise awareness about homelessness.

He is an advocate for rescue missions because of their Christian focus of helping the homeless.

"It's holistic. It's not just saying no to drugs. It's saying no to drugs and helping you build a whole new life," Yankoski said.

"I think we need more people getting involved with the issues of homelessness. But that doesn't mean they need to live on the streets," he said.

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## Area's tough times tapping local charities' ability to help needy

**FLINT**

**THE FLINT JOURNAL FIRST EDITION**

Friday, September 29, 2006

**By Laura Misjak**

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FLINT - A line streaming out the door of the Salvation Army on W. Kearsley Street began to dwindle shortly after 9 a.m. on a recent weekday.

One by one, people left the building, disappointment on their faces. The 25 or more people in line were seeking money to pay their utility bills.

Things are getting worse, said the Salvation Army's Capt. John Williams. Every week, he turns away people seeking help with their living expenses.

"We just don't have the capacity," he said.

"I have had friends tell me that you have to stand in line at 5 or 4 or 3 a.m.," said Tiffani B., who didn't want to give her last name. She began her wait for assistance at 8 a.m., one hour before the building opened, and didn't receive the help she wanted.

Flint recently was labeled Michigan's poorest city with 65,000 or more residents by the U.S. Census. One in three city residents lives in poverty, according to the figures.

But local agency officials, such as Capt. John Williams of the Salvation Army, have known this for awhile. Every week, the Salvation Army turns away 150 people who are seeking help with their living expenses.

"We just don't have the capacity," Williams said.

During the past fiscal year, the Salvation Army helped 2,365 people. It has helped 2,183 people so far this year, said Roxanne Price, director of social services, and expects to see 400 more before the end of the fiscal year, Sept. 30.

Other local agencies have the same problem: not enough money for the number of people in need.

Danielle Fry, business manager of Flint's Catholic Outreach, said her agency simply can't help any more people for the rest of the year.

The agency sees about 30 to 40 people a day when open, and it has helped 2,200 adults and 1,800 children with food or utilities from January until August.

The numbers are lower than last year's - in 2005 they saw 2,358 adults and 2,720 children - But their annual grant from the state has decreased over time by \$10,000.

"We've put up a sign because we ran out of grant money this year," Fry said. "Last year, we had to close at about the same time."

Williams said the Salvation Army can assist only about 30 people each day it's open, Monday through Wednesday. Lines begin to form about 7 a.m. outside the building, with those in need aiming to become

### QUICK TAKE

How to get help

- For help with utility bills, contact the Salvation Army at (810) 232-2196 or the Genesee County Community Action Resource Department at (810) 232-2185.

one of the "first come, first served" when the office opens at 9 a.m.

"We have people vying for position," Williams said. "Some of them have probably slept the night there."

Although the problem isn't new, it is alarming, Williams said. The Salvation Army, which primarily helps with utility bills, is facing just part of the effects Flint's poor economy has had.

The major jump in poverty in Genesee County came between 1980-1990, when Census statistics showed a 55 percent increase, said Steve Walker, executive director of the Genesee County Community Action Resource Department. He said the trend has continued from 1990 to the present, but hasn't been climbing as drastically.

Walker said the agency routinely has to turn away people asking for assistance.

"We take telephone calls, and starting at 8 a.m., we take the first 20 phone calls," he said. "We have anywhere from 50 to a couple of hundred of calls that come in every day."

Walker issued a warning: Those living in need in Flint may never see their way out.

"If you're living in poverty and trying to live off a minimum-wage job, you're not going to have enough financial resources to pay for all the things you need to take care of your basic needs," he said. "Would you call that a crisis? I would call that a crisis."

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## THE ANN ARBOR NEWS

### Day-care license problem

State official says Brighton woman needs to file application

Friday, September 29, 2006

**BY TOM TOLEN**

**News Staff Reporter**

A woman who regularly takes Brighton City officials to task for not following all the rules has been violating state law by operating a day care in her home without a license.

Susan Walters-Steinacker, a Brighton resident who says she spends as much as 30 to 40 hours a week attending city meetings and investigating city issues and officials, takes care of the three young children in her home. Until questioned by The Livingston Community News this week, she has contended that she was baby-sitting and did not need to be licensed.

State Department of Human Services officials say she can call it what she wants, but she needs a license.

"That really does fall under Act 116, and she should be in compliance," says state DHS Director of Day Care Licensing Jim Sinnamon. "There are a lot of people who don't realize what the law says."

What that law says, according to state officials, is that anyone who babysits in his or her home for more than four weeks out of the year - whether an adult or a minor - is operating a "family day care home," and is subject to licensing requirements spelled out in Act 116 of 1973, the Child Care Licensing Act.

Walters-Steinacker was featured in a story last week that detailed her watchdog role over Brighton city government. She clashed recently with Brighton City Council Member John Tunis over a charity fundraiser Tunis hosted at his house. One of her complaints was that event organizers did not get the proper state permit for what she called a raffle. Organizers contend they were giving away door prizes and did not need a permit.

After being questioned about her own licensing situation this week by The Livingston Community News, Walters-Steinacker checked again with state DHS officials and says she will comply with the licensing requirements.

"They're sending out the documents, and I will get it all taken care of," Walters-Steinacker says. "Whatever the law tells me to do, I'll do ... I'm the first person who doesn't want to be breaking the law," she adds.

She says she was earlier told by local DHS (formerly Department of Social Services) officials that she did not need to be licensed. "If the DSS tells me no, (I don't have to be licensed), I'm going to believe what they tell me," she says.

Walters-Steinacker says she is paid by the hour, and files an annual income tax form with the government, listing her income from the baby-sitting service and paying all applicable taxes. She cares for three young children, ages 3, 5 and 8, at her Brighton home.

State DHS Director of Communication Maureen Sorbet says any individual operating a family day care home must register with the state and be licensed. The rules also require the operator to be certified in cardiopulmonary resuscitation and first aid, among other criteria. Walters-Steinacker says she is CPR-trained, though she says her certification may have lapsed.

Additionally, state rules require the license applicant be at least 18, have a high school diploma or equivalent, undergo (along with family members living at home) a criminal background check and get medical clearance, including documentation of tuberculosis test results for all persons 14 and older living in the home.

Likewise required are inspection of the home heating, hot water heater and smoke detector systems, and, after approval of the application, attendance at a six-hour orientation session.

Sinnamon says anyone operating a family day care home without a license, but who is going through the process of obtaining one, should not be operating while the license is pending.

"We can't grant authority to operate in violation of Act 116," he says. "When someone applies, we're going to work as quickly as possible to get her licensed, but it's going to take several months."

Sorbet said that since the enforcement system is complaint-based, it's up to citizens to let the department know if there is a suspected violation. "The public has the responsibility to let us know," she says.

Violations are a misdemeanor offense. "There are criminal penalties if they continue to operate without a license," Sorbet says. Rules and procedures may be obtained online at [www.michigan.gov/dhs](http://www.michigan.gov/dhs), or by calling 1-866-685-0006.

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## **Club to collect food, donations for local needy**

CADILLAC - The Cadillac Area Pathfinder and Adventurer Clubs are dropping off 1,200 empty grocery bags to homes in the Cadillac area for people to fill with canned foods or non-perishable dry goods as part of the third annual Cadillac Area Campaign.

The items collected will be given to the Cadillac area food pantries for distribution to those in need. An envelope will be placed in each bag with the goal of collecting \$500 for additional help to the needy.

Volunteers will pick the bags up between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Sunday. People are asked to leave the bag on the porch in full view of the road so volunteers can see it clearly. In case of rain, people are asked to place it in a plastic bag.

If the bag is missed or wasn't put outside in time, people can call (231) 878-6389 to make arrangements for pick-up.

Saginaw News Letters

September 29, 2006

## **Save the expense**

Editor, The News:

Mindful of the state's dire financial situation, I have a cost-cutting proposal: Merge the Department of Corrections Parole Board and the Child Protective Services into one.

In light of the Ricky Holland tragedy, and the wrongful early parole of Patrick Selepak, I'll rephrase the old adage: Two can bungle as cheaply as one.

Jack L. Brinker

Midland